

Comment on the proposed designation of a neotype for *Conus jaspideus* Gmelin, 1791

(Case 3396; see BZN 64: 144–148)

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We disagree with the assumption in the application that Vink's (1991) neotype designation for *Conus jaspideus* is invalidated by Clench's (1942) previously unnoticed lectotype designation. The application states (para. 5): '... Vink's (1991) designation of a neotype cannot supersede the existing lectotype, even in the situation where the type series has not been extant'.

This contradicts Article 75.1 which says neotypes can be designated 'when no name-bearing type specimen (e.g., holotype, lectotype, syntype or prior neotype) is believed to be extant. ...'. Inasmuch as the authors confirm that none of the specimens of the original type series, including the lectotype, can be traced, their mention of an 'existing lectotype' (para. 5) is a misstatement and Vink's neotype designation (which they seek to confirm) stands. Also, Article 75.8 pertains only to the rediscovery of name-bearing types themselves, not to overlooked lectotype designations. There is thus no need for action by the Commission.

Comments on the proposed conservation of the usage of the generic name of *Drosophila* Fallén, 1823 (Insecta, Diptera) by fixation of *Drosophila melanogaster* Meigen, 1830 as type species.

(Case 3407; see BZN 64: 238–242; BZN 65: 55–57)

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I wish to express my strong support for the application. *Drosophila melanogaster* is one of the few names in zoology that are recognised as such within numerous biological disciplines, and it is one of the first names that every student of biology meets having entered the field. As such its preservation is a matter of importance far beyond the field of taxonomy. As the object of the Code of Nomenclature is to promote stability and universality, it is difficult to think of a case where a decision by the Commission would be more important.

As the situation is now, the genus *Drosophila* includes a huge number of species, and it is well known that many specialists would prefer to divide it into more natural groups, were it not for the fact that *melanogaster* would belong to another genus; the expected confusion has been a strong deterrent. In fact, here the nomenclature rules have actually interfered with systematic work. To agree to the proposal would free research. As of yet, the genus has not been dismembered, and a change of subgeneric names would be a matter concerning a comparatively small number of taxonomists.

There have been numerous trifling cases, where usage has been preserved for names that only specialists recognise, and in my opinion no real confusion would have resulted, even if many of those names had been changed. This case is different, its implications are of the widest nature, and I hope the Commission will approve the application.

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I tend to be conservative and believe that the Commission should not use its plenary powers every now and then to rescue junior names favoured by a mere handful of researchers, but I agree with Polaszek (BZN 65: 55) that if there be one binomen in zoological nomenclature that should be cast in concrete, it is *Drosophila melanogaster* Meigen, 1830.

For decades, this species has been the most widely used model in genetics and developmental biology. The supremacy of *D. melanogaster* over its congeners in current research is still overwhelming: a search in ISI Web of Science® with the species name as topic resulted in 26,608 hits for *D. melanogaster* since 1987 (checked on 24 April 2008), against 11 for *D. funebris*, the present type species of *Drosophila* Fallén. The other *Drosophila* of the *funebris*-group defended by Yassin (BZN 65: 56) lay also far behind *D. melanogaster*, the most frequently cited of these being *D. virilis* with 368 records. Note that *D. simulans* Sturtevant, 1919, one of the closest relatives of *D. melanogaster*, fares better (893 records). This species, important in speciation studies, would also be preserved from a change of genus by the designation of *D. melanogaster* as type species of *Drosophila*.

It is clear that with the development of phylogenetic knowledge, the strict application of the Code would soon result in the transfer of *D. melanogaster* to *Sophophora* Sturtevant. Although some strict taxonomists would perhaps acknowledge such a change, a multitude of molecular and developmental biologists would regard with utmost incomprehension their flagship species renamed *Sophophora melanogaster*. This would cause extreme confusion, especially because so many non-taxonomists are involved. This is an exceptional case, where the whole credibility of the Commission is at stake. I highly recommend that the Commission vote in favour of the application of van der Linde et al. (BZN 64: 238–242).

Comment on the proposed conservation of the generic names *Trigonostomum* Schmidt, 1852 (Platyhelminthes, TRIGONOSTOMIDAE) and *Trigonostomus* Brenske, 1893 (Coleoptera, SCARABAEIDAE) and proposed emendation of the current spelling of TRIGONOSTOMINA Ohaus, 1912 (Coleoptera, SCARABAEIDAE) to remove homonymy with TRIGONOSTOMIDAE Graff, 1905 (Platyhelminthes)
(Case 3405; see BZN 64: 218–223)

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I support Willems's and Krell's application to conserve the usage of the generic name *Trigonostomum* Schmidt, 1852 for a group of marine flatworms (family TRIGONOSTOMIDAE) and remove the homonymy between the chafer subtribe name TRIGONOSTOMINA Ohaus, 1912 (type genus *Trigonostomum* Burmeister, 1844; family SCARABAEIDAE). For the scarab beetle genus, it is reasonable to use the incorrect subsequent spelling *Trigonostomus* Brenske, 1893 as a substitute name for *Trigonostomum* Burmeister, 1844. Additionally, adopting the stem of this name for the scarab beetle tribe will remove homonymy with Graff's flatworm family name. These actions will help to maintain stability and universality of nomenclature.

I wish to correct the species composition in the scarab beetle genus *Trigonostomum* Burmeister. The genus is comprised of nine species (Machatschke, 1972, 1974): *T. djampeanum* Ohaus, 1912; *T. mascarenum* Ohaus, 1941, *T. melolonthoides* Fairmaire, 1896; *T. mucoreum* Burmeister, 1844; *T. oedipus* Fairmaire, 1903; *T. scutatum* Fairmaire, 1896; *T. sudanicum* Ohaus, 1935; *T. ursus* Arrow, 1911; *T. sericans* Thomson, 1958. Based on the proposed emendation, the species names would change in agreement with the new genus.

It should be noted that Machatschke (1972, p. 339) referred to the scarab beetle subtribe as 'TRIGONODOSTOMINA'. This spelling was not used by Machatschke (1965), and it is apparently a lapsus. Using this misspelling, in my view, would not help to preserve nomenclatural stability and should be avoided.

Additional References

- Machatschke, J.W.** 1965. Coleoptera Lamellicornia. Fam. Scarabaeidae, Subfam. Rutelinae, Section Rutelinae Orthochilidae. Pp. 1–145 in: *Genera Insectorum*, Fasc. 199C.
Machatschke, J.W. 1972. Scarabaeoidea: Melolonthidae, Rutelinae. *Coleopterorum Catalogus, Supplementa*, 66(1): 1–361.
Machatschke, J.W. 1974. Scarabaeoidea: Melolonthidae, Rutelinae. *Coleopterorum Catalogus, Supplementa*, 66(2): 363–429.

Comments on the proposed conservation of *Buettneria* Case, 1922 (Amphibia)

(Case 3420; see BZN 64(4): 252–254; BZN 65(1): 60–62)

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I am writing to oppose the petition of Lucas et al. for the ICZN to use their plenary power to conserve the Late Triassic metoposaurid generic name *Buettneria* Case, 1922. I support the proposals in the comment by Hausdorf (BZN 65: 60–62) to suppress both the metoposaurid genus *Buettneria* Case, 1922 and the Orthopteran genus *Buettneria* Karsh, 1888, in favour of the senior homonym *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888 (Mollusca). His comment also illustrated that I, along with Lucas et al., had failed to notice the senior homonym, *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888 (Mollusca, Gastropoda). Hausdorf's argument against the conservation of the metoposaurid generic name cited Van Goethem (1977) in outlining the priority of *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888 over *Buettneria* Karsch, 1888 (1889), and *Buettneria* Case, 1922.

The metoposaurid genus *Buettneria* Case, 1922, is not without change in the past. The metoposaurid taxon *Buettneria perfecta* (*Koskinonodon perfectus*) was synonymized by Colbert and Imbrie (1956) as a junior synonym of the metoposaurid genus *Eupelor* Cope, 1868 and then Chowdhury (1965) synonymized the taxon with the metoposaurid genus *Metoposaurus* Lydekker, 1890. In Hunt's (1993) revision of the Metoposauridae, he resurrected *Buettneria* Case, 1922 and listed *Metoposaurus* (in part), *Koskinonodon*, *Borborophagus*, and *Eupelor* (in part) in the synonymy of the genus. This shows that the metoposaurid genus has not had a stable past and the suppression of *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888, in favour of a junior homonym for stability of nomenclature is not justified. I myself have used the name *Buettneria* Case, 1922 in the past (Houle & Mueller, 2004) and the preoccupation of the generic name was brought to my attention through this research.

My original petition to the Commission in 2005 (Case 3358) received the response (Andrew Polaszek, pers. comm., 24 July 2006) that, after review, a ruling by the Commission was unnecessary as the petition was straightforward and just needed to be published. The fact that Hausdorf (BZN 65: 60–62) points out that the 'senior' homonym I cited was actually a junior homonym of *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888, re-enforces the proposal that the metoposaurid genus *Buettneria* Case, 1922, should be suppressed and replaced with its junior synonym *Koskinonodon* Branson & Mehl, 1929.

Additional References.

- Chowdhury, T. Roy.** 1965. A new metoposaurid amphibian from the upper Triassic Maleri Formation of Central India. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, Series B*, **250**: 1–52.
- Colbert, E.H. & Imbrie, J.** 1956. Triassic metoposaurid amphibians. *American Museum of Natural History Bulletin*, **110**(6): 399–452.
- Houle, M.O. & Mueller, B.** 2004. A New Occurrence of *Buettneria bakeri* (Temnospondyli: Metoposauridae) from the Norian (Cooper Canyon Formation, Dockum Group) of West Texas. *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*, **24**(3): 73A.

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In his comment, Hausdorf (BZN 65(1): 60–62) points out that the generic name of the African gastropod *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888 has priority over the generic names *Buettneria* Karsch, 1889 (an African insect) and *Buettneria* Case, 1922 (a fossil amphibian). He thus does not support our application to suppress *Buettneria* Karsch, 1889 in order to conserve *Buettneria* Case, 1922, and he concludes it would best serve the stability and universality of nomenclature to conserve *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888 and replace its two junior homonyms with other names.

However, Hausdorf (BZN 65(1): 60–62) fails to point out how little use there has been of the generic name *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888, so that like *Buettneria* Karsch, 1889 it is a virtual nomen oblitum. Thus, after Simroth's (1888) introduction of the name and his subsequent replacement of the name with *Buettnerella* Simroth, 1910 (in the mistaken belief that Karsch's introduction of the name *Buettneria* had priority over his own), we can find no published usage of the name *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888 that meets the criteria required by Article 23.9 of the Code until Van Gotheim (1975). This means that *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888 was a nomen oblitum between 1910 and 1975.

Van Gotheim (1975) then used the name *Buettneria* to introduce a new species of the genus. Van Gotheim (1977) pointed out that *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888 had priority over *Buettneria* Karsch, 1889. Yet, during the subsequent 30 years, the few uses of *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888, such as Schileyko (2002), very closely approach the conditions set in Article 23.9.1 of the Code. This means that *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888 continues to be a virtual nomen oblitum.

In contrast, *Buettneria* Case, 1922 is a widely used name in the technical and non-technical literature of palaeontology, appearing in many articles, monographs and textbooks (see BZN 64(4): 252–254). This is because the name has been frequently applied to a common Late Triassic amphibian from North America with close relatives or possible records in Europe, Africa, Madagascar and India. We have provided the Secretariat with a sample list of 75 published usages of *Buettneria* Case, 1922, by 45 authors in the 85 year interval 1922–2007, and many more can be compiled. The list only includes usages in the text of scientific papers and books; no usages in references cited or popular publications are listed. *Buettneria* Case, 1922 thus meets the conditions of Article 23.9.1.2 of the Code.

Therefore, in the interests of stability of nomenclature, we believe that suppression of the obscure and little used name *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888 is advisable to avoid confusion. The replacement name *Buettnerella* Simroth, 1910 is already available for this taxon.

In addition to the proposals published in BZN 64(4): 253, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to suppress the name *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888 and all uses of this name for the purposes of both the Principle of Priority and the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the name *Buettneria* Simroth, 1888, as suppressed in (1) above.

Additional References

- Schileyko, A.A.** 2002. Treatise on Recent terrestrial pulmonate molluscs, Part 9. Helicarionidae, Gymnarionidae, Rhysotinae, Ariophantidae. *Ruthenica Supplement*, **2**: 1167–1307.
- Simroth, H.** 1888. Über die azorisch-portugiesische Nacktschneckenfauna und ihre Beziehungen (Vorläufe Mittheilung). *Zoologischer Anzeiger*, **11**: 86–90.
- Simroth, H.** 1910. Lissopode Nacktschnecken von Madagaskar den Comoren und Mauritius. Unter Berücksichtigung verwandter Arten. Pp. 576–622, pls. 25–26 in Voetzkow, A. (Ed.), *Reise in Ostafrika in der Jahren 1903–1905. Wissenschaftliche Ergebnisse*, vol. 2. Schweizerbart, Stuttgart.
- Van Goetheim, L.** 1975. Descriptions et diagnoses préliminaires d'espèces et genres nouveaux d'Urocyclinae. *Revue de Zoologie Africaine*, **89**: 859–870.
- Van Goetheim, L.** 1977. Révision systématique des Urocyclinae (Mollusca, Pulmonata, Urocyclidae). *Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, Belgique, Annals, Sciences Zoologiques*, **218**: i–xi, 1–355.